



BRIAR HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

Rationale:

The Education & Training Reform Act 2006 empowers School Councils to charge parents/guardians for goods and services used in the course of instruction of their children, as well as to raise funds. As the quality and variety of educational programs offered by our school are enhanced by doing so, our School Council requests payment from parents/guardians for certain student materials and services, and for modest voluntary financial contributions.

Aims:

- To ensure that all students have access to the standard curriculum program
- To be aware of items clearly designated as Steiner inspired
- To provide high quality learning opportunities for all students, by supplementing limited government funds with approved financial contributions and payments from parents/guardians
- To ensure that all costs are kept to a minimum

Implementation

- School Council supplements DET funds by requesting (yearly per student fees) payments from parents for the following items:-
 1. **Essential Education Items** which parents/guardians are required to provide or pay the school to provide Eg: stationery booklists, text books, classroom bulk items and photocopying.
 2. **Optional Extras (Term Planners)** which are offered on a user pays basis and parents/guardians can choose whether or not their child participates eg: school camp, excursions, instrument hire (private tuition), swimming program, cooking program, graduation, and other items as identified in the Term Planner.
- In addition, School Council invites parents to make donations by means of:-
 3. **Voluntary Financial Contributions** which are non-compulsory donations for specific projects Eg: library resources, grounds' projects, or technologies equipment. The Briar Hill Building & Library Fund falls into this category and it is a voluntary contribution that has a tax deductible status.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of the costs associated with all payments and voluntary contributions by December of the previous year, along with a recommended

payments schedule. Parents are provided with at least six weeks' notice of final payment dates.

- Payment is requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year/term in which the materials and services are to be used.
- The payments schedule will include itemised details relating to all payments, payment dates, options to make payments by instalments, clear definitions of the category of any payments (ie: Essential, Optional or Voluntary), and advice to parents/guardians to contact the Principal if they require support or additional information.
- If parents/guardians wish to purchase equivalent essential education items themselves, they may do so in consultation with the school.
- **All payments and non-payments will be strictly confidential. The public identification of students or their parents/guardians where payments have or have not been received will not occur.**
- All costs and processes associated with payments and voluntary contributions will be reasonable, will be defensible in relation to DET requirements and will be within the expectations of the school community.
- As with all payments to the school, School Council will provide opportunities for all parents/guardians experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangements with the Principal. This can be facilitated by contacting the Business Manager to arrange a meeting with the Principal. Following confidential discussions with the Principal, individual arrangements **specific to the family's circumstances** will be determined and implemented.
- A range of support options are available to support and assist parents who are experiencing financial hardship. These can be accessed through Cost support for families (see the document attached).
- Invoices for unpaid **Essential Items** and **Optional Extras (Term Planners)** will be mailed monthly, with requests for **Voluntary Financial Contributions** to occur once each year.
- Unpaid **Essential Items** payments will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family. Unpaid **Optional Extras** payments may compromise a student's ability to be involved in the optional activity in the future. Unpaid **Voluntary Financial Contributions** do not constitute a non-payment and will not result in any detriment by the school to the student or family.
- No collectors of any type, including debt collectors, will be used to obtain funds from parents/guardians or students.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and adhere to it.
- The policy meets the community's expectations and is available to the school community via the school website.

- Parents with concerns relating to school charges and payments should contact either the school Principal or members of the School Council.
- The School Council is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the policy, identifying the factors to be taken into account, including transparency of processes and engagement with parents, and how and when it will be reported back to the school community.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed regularly. School Council will review the level and purpose of parent payments and voluntary contributions annually and in doing so will be consistent with any advice or instruction received from the DET.

Updated re DET Mail- Parent Payments 2/09/2016



Parent Payment -
Cost support.docx

Date of approval by School Council: November 15, 2016